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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria
SUBJECT Medical Information

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1. The Central Hospital for Railroad Workers (Tsentralna Transportna Bolnitsa), located in a 3-story building at 148 Georgi Dimitrov Street in Sofia, has the following departments:
 - a. Internal diseases, with 70 to 80 beds and 15 physicians, located on the third floor;
 - b. Surgery, with 70 beds and nine physicians and 12 nurses, located on the second floor, with the operating theater on the first floor; and
 - c. Gynecology, with 30 beds and five physicians, located on the first floor.
2. Dr. Aleksandrov, a surgeon, is the administrative manager of the hospital. Dr. Zhelev is the head of the gynecological department; Dr. Steliyan Kirov is the head of the surgical department; and Dr. Petur Logofetov is the head of the internal diseases department.
3. A polyclinic for ambulatory treatment is located in the yard of the hospital. It has departments for internal diseases, surgery, pediatrics, diseases of the ear, throat and nose, ophthalmology, and X-ray, each with a physician and either a nurse or medical assistant. While the hospital is reserved for railroad workers, and in emergency cases, for other citizens, the clinic is open to all the inhabitants of the district.
4. Railroad workers have their own health network, which is constantly expanding. In 1952 two new hospitals were established, one at Burgas and the other at Gorna Oryakhovitsa. However, these are insufficient and there is a plan to erect additional hospitals.

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5. The hospitals have adequate supplies of surgical instruments, most of which are of local manufacture; however, their finish is not as good as those of foreign production. Delicate instruments are those remaining from previous years or are imported, mainly from Czechoslovakia. Surgical rubber gloves are imported in large quantities from Czechoslovakia.
6. The hospitals receive almost all drugs, though not always in sufficient quantities. Drugs produced in Bulgaria, such as Glukosa, Alkiron, Strofantin, digitalis, chinin, liver extract, all vitamins, and sulfanimides, are amply available. PAS (Para Amino Salicylate) of Soviet manufacture (PASK) and rimiphon, which informant believes is of Czech manufacture, are available in sufficient quantities. Streptomycin, terramycin and aureomycin of foreign manufacture are available in limited quantities. There is no shortage of locally produced penicillin ointment and foreign (Soviet, Czech and other) crystalline penicillin.
7. Outside the hospitals drugs can be obtained in pharmacies only with a doctor's prescription. The purchase of penicillin requires a special prescription signed by two physicians. Streptomycin and other antibiotics are rarely available in pharmacies and can only be obtained after a complicated procedure. Rimiphon and PAS are available only at tuberculosis clinics.
8. Recently, injections of Czech Polidin have been administered for cancer but give only temporary alleviation.
9. Blood transfusions are carried out in almost all hospitals, only fresh blood being used. Several hospitals in Sofia have special cold storage installations and donors give their blood there. The central blood bank is at the Red Cross Hospital at Verila Street in Sofia. There are many blood donors, who receive 160 leva for 250 cc of blood, plus three days leave from work after every blood donation.
10. Only 500 candidates were admitted to the Medical College in Sofia for the 1953-54 semester, this number representing those who were successful in contest examinations in chemistry, biology and literature. Previously these examinations played a secondary role in the admittance of the candidate, the main factor being a recommendation from the Local Council of the place of permanent residence stating the social origin of the student, his political affiliations, etc. These recommendations were cancelled in 1953-54 due to the virtual liquidation of the bourgeois and semibourgeois class and to the fact that all the candidates were members of the DSNM (Dimitrovski Soyuz na Narodnata Mladezh: Dimitrov Union of the People's Youth). According to one successful candidate, the only document required by the examining committee was a certificate from the candidates' secondary school regarding his character, ability, and behavior during his studies.

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